



December 15, 2005

TO: Transportation Authority of Marin Commissioners

FROM: Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director

RE: Transportation for Livable Communities Funding Award – Agenda Item 9

Dear Commissioners:

**Executive Summary**

The TAM Board adopted county-wide Transportation for Livable Communities (Local TLC) Program Guidelines in October 2004. A Call for Projects was issued in September, 2005 with project proposals due on November 14, 2005. We received a tremendous response with five proposals totaling \$1,948,906. Only \$740,000 is available for this cycle. Each of the proposals was competitively evaluated against each other on a range of pre-set evaluation criteria based upon the program goals of the Local TLC program. One proposal clearly fit the TLC goals, is already a federalized project, and is ready to go. One other proposal more closely fit the TLC goals and readiness criteria than the other remaining applications. **Recommendation: The TAM Board adopt the recommended list of projects for the Local Transportation for Livable Communities Program.**

**BACKGROUND**

On November 14, 2005, the first cycle of the Local TLC program closed with three cities and two county agencies submitting projects for funding approval. The Local TLC program has \$740,000 available this cycle. Per the program requirements, grant requests must be between \$150,000 and \$500,000.

The cities and county project submittals and their respective TLC program requests include:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Sponsoring Agency</b>	<b>TLC Program Request</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
Corte Madera Bay Trail Improvements Project	Town of Corte Madera	\$500,000	\$557,350
Center Boulevard Streetscape Redesign Project	Town of Fairfax	\$500,000	\$1,085,350
Fireside Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements	Marin County Community Development Agency/Citizens Housing	\$198,906	\$398,906
Marin County Transit District Bus Stop Improvement Project	Marin County DPW/MCTD	\$250,000	\$278,675
San Rafael West End Village Revitalization Project	City of San Rafael	\$500,000	\$2,500,00

The Local TLC program is a competitively awarded funding program, where the applicants are evaluated against each other. Each of the project applications were evaluated on a range of pre-set evaluation criteria based upon the program goals of the Local TLC program. In order for the applicants to obtain a high ranking the project, concepts must conform to the spirit of the Local TLC program. These program goals include:

- Project is developed through a collaborative and inclusive planning process with broad partnerships among stakeholders such as public agencies, community-based organizations and community stakeholders
- Improve a range of transportation choices by adding or improving pedestrian, transit, and /or bicycle facilities and by improving the links between these facilities and activity nodes
- Support well-designed, high-density workforce housing and mixed use developments that are well served by transit, or will help build the capacity for future transit investment and use
- Support affordable housing developments
- Support a community's infill or transit oriented development and neighborhood revitalization activities
- Improve the safety of routes and access to schools
- Are environmentally sustainable
- Enhance a community's sense of place and quality of life

No project will meet all of the Local TLC program goals; however, it is important that the approved projects meet the overall spirit of the program. The Local TLC program offers communities the opportunity to complete projects that link together transportation and land use, such as enhancing downtown areas, commercial cores, neighborhoods, and transit corridors into

places where people want to live, work and visit. The projects that were given priority ranking by staff attempt to best highlight and feature these attributes in their respective communities.

Projects not receiving priority ranking were placed as such due to the fact they did not as closely meet the goals of the Local TLC Program, did not have competitive timelines, or the projects were not as clearly defined when compared to the projects staff recommends for funding award.

### **RECOMMENDED PROJECT AWARDS**

- ❖ Center Boulevard Streetscape Redesign Project – Town of Fairfax (\$500,000 funding amount + \$57,350 local match)  
Sponsoring Agency: Town of Fairfax

The Town of Fairfax, with their Center Boulevard Streetscape Redesign Project, provided the clearest connection between the Local TLC program goals and their application. The project is proposing to redesign their Center Boulevard area as part of a larger downtown revitalization effort geared toward bringing new vibrancy to downtown Fairfax. The project looks to address issues such as:

- User conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians
- Unsafe conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Enhance the streetscape to encourage pedestrian travel
- Encourage travel between the residential areas and the commercial core
- Enhance the heart of the Fairfax community

The Town of Fairfax held a series of community workshops with downtown stakeholders and the public at large for both the downtown revitalization effort and the Center Boulevard redesign effort. Through these community workshops, and working with consultants, the town developed a series of three street design and concept alternatives. Based on the community and stakeholder input, the Fairfax Town Council selected one alternative in August, 2004.

The total project cost for the Center Boulevard redesign is \$1,085,350. Fairfax is requesting \$500,000, with a local match of \$57,350. Additional funding is available and secured from a combination of TIP federal funds and the associated local match. Combined with these Local TLC funds, the project will be fully funded and is already a federalized project.

Center Boulevard is a heavily traveled road by all modes of travel: automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians. The redesign project garnered widespread interest due to the coalition of stakeholders involved in the process, from the nearby residents to the commercial owners and business land lords. What also set this project apart from the other applicants is project schedule, which ensures that all of the federal timelines will be met. Overall, the Center Boulevard project, as presented in its application, best exemplifies the Local TLC program goals as compared to the other projects. For this reason, staff recommends the Town of Fairfax Center Boulevard Streetscape Redesign project as the Local TLC funding first priority.

- ❖ Fireside Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements – Marin County Community Development Agency (\$198,906 funding amount + \$200,000 local match)

Sponsoring Agency: Marin County Community Development Agency

Co-Sponsoring Agency: Citizens Housing Corporation

Other Project Partners: Homeward Bound of Marin, California Housing Partnership Corporation

The Fireside Apartments Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements application was presented as a piece in an overall larger project that includes a 50 unit affordable housing development located nearby to the Manzanita Transit Center. While the proposed housing development is located within walking distance to the transit center, there is no clear pedestrian connection from the housing development to the transit center. The project application proposes to make the pedestrian connection stronger through a traffic light guided crosswalk and a redesigned pedestrian friendly street edge.

The Fireside Apartments project has long been before the local community, having received its entitlements in June 2003. The project sponsor anticipates that the estimated start date for construction of the housing development and off site improvements is April 2006. The total project cost for the off site improvements is \$398,906. Marin County Community Development Agency is requesting \$198,906 to supplement the \$200,000 the County has secured from a Transportation Funds for Clean Air grant.

To increase pedestrian safety on the site, the project includes abandoning three existing driveways that open onto Shoreline highway and creating a new Two-Way Left Turn Lane (TWLTL) on Shoreline Highway into a new expanded driveway to be shared by the neighboring Fountain motel and the Fireside project. By reducing the number of driveways from three to one, this simplified circulation system will improve safety for pedestrians by increasing the predictability of the path of vehicular movements across the pedestrian right-of-way. This is a critical improvement to ensure safe pedestrian circulation within the vicinity of the site, particularly important to encourage walking to the adjacent Manzanita Transit Center, and accessing the Shoreline Trail system, an excellent circulation corridor for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Fireside Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements project is part of a larger project that will be a real benefit to Marin County and is the result of a collaborative planning process involving the community since 2000. Affordable, high density housing nearby to transit centers is an important goal within the Local TLC program, and enabling the development safer and more direct pedestrian access to transit falls into this category. The project has identified shortcomings in the pedestrian connection to the nearby Manzanita Transit Center, and staff recommends funding for this project to ensure that when the overall project is completed, it will be successful in linking the land use and transportation aspects together.

### **Fund Reallocation**

The recommended programming of Local TLC funds would leave \$41,094 of unprogrammed funds (\$740,000 total - \$500,000 (Fairfax) - \$198,906 (Fireside) = \$41,094). Because this amount is not enough to fund another minimum-sized project of \$150K, staff recommends that this amount be reallocated into the HIP program. The HIP Program is currently open for another 15 months and would total \$1,010K (969K + \$41K = \$1,010K). Staff is expecting the submittal of one HIP application for approximately \$440K this month and expects to bring it to the TAM Board in January, 2006 for fund reservation.

### **Recommendation:**

- 1. That the TAM Board adopt the Local TLC Programming as recommended by staff; and,**
- 2. That the TAM Board reallocation the remaining \$41,094 into the Local HIP Program**